

## Message Text

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11

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 AID-20 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02 TRSE-00

XMB-07 OPIC-12 CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 FEA-02

DRC-01 /185 W

----- 059969

R 211510Z MAR 74

FM AMCONSUL CURACAO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1755

INFO AMCONSULPARAMARIBO

AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

UNCLAS CURACAO 0161

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, ETRN, NA

SUBJECT: DELAYS IN SHIPPING U.S. GOODS TO THE NETHERLANDS  
ANTILLES.

REF: CURACAO 43: STATE 1729, 235324, 032977.

1. THE SIX ISLANDS WHICH MAKE UP THE NETHERLANDS ANTILLES  
ARE SELF SUFFICIENT IN VIRTUALLY NOTHING. ALMOST ALL GOODS  
MUST BE IMPORTED, PAYMENT IS MADE BY PROFITS GENERATED FROM  
TOURISM, TWO LARGE OIL REFINERIES, SOME LIGHT ASSEMBLY  
INDUSTRIES AND A SUBSIDY FROM THE NETHERLANDS GOVERNMENT.  
AS AN IMPORT ORIENTED ECONOMY, ITS LOCATION IN THE  
CARIBBEAN HAS GIVEN THE NETHERLANDS ANTILLES CLOSE HISTORICAL  
AND COMMERCIAL TIES WITH THE UNITED STATES.

2. RECENTLY LOCAL MERCHANTS HAVE COMPLAINED THAT GOODS  
IMPORTED FROM THE UNITED STATES HAVE FACED LONG DELAYS IN  
DELIVERY, THEY STATE SHIPPING, MAINLY FROM THE PORT OF MIAMI,  
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IS BECOMING CONGESTED AND SERVICE TO BRING GOODS TO THE

ISLANDS OF CURACAO AND ARUBA, THE TWO MOST POPULATED OF THE ISLANDS, IS NOT AVAILABLE. PARTICULARLY AFFECTED HAVE BEEN CONSUMER DURABLES AND NON-DURABLES, ESPECIALLY FOOD ITEMS.

3. THE SHIPMENTS CONCERNED ARE LARGE BY CURACAO STANDARDS. AN INFORMAL SURVEY BY THE CONSULATE GENERAL OF SEVERAL MAJOR IMPORTERS BROUGHT TO LIGHT AN ESTIMATED DOLS 3.2 MILLION WORTH OF GOODS AT THE PORTS OF MIAMI, BALTIMORE AND NEW YORK, SOME OF WHICH HAD BEEN WAITING SHIPMENT SINCE OCTOBER.

4. THE ITEMS ARE GENERALLY MOVED THROUGH A U.S. FREIGHT FORWARDER. THE MAJOR CARRIER INVOLVED IS PAN AMERICAN MAIL LINES, A NON-CONFERENCE SHIPPING LINE WHICH OFFERS THE LOWEST RATES FOR DIRECT MIAMI-CURACAO SERVICE. THE LINE HAS REPORTED THAT THERE HAS SIMPLY BEEN NO SPACE AVAILABLE FOR HIGHER THAN NORMAL SHIPMENTS: WHILE THIS IS A REASONABLE ASSERTION FOR SOME DELAY, LOCAL IMPORTERS FIND IT DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE THAT THE SPACE SITUATION CAN CONTINUE TO CAUSE THREE TO SIX MONTHS DELAYS IN SHIPPING. LOCAL AGENTS OF PAN AMERICAN MAIL LINES REPORT THAT THE COMPANY HAS BOUGHT ONE ADDITIONAL VESSEL AND CHARTERED ANOTHER AND HOPE THAT THIS WILL SOLVE THE PROBLEM WITHIN THE NEXT SIX WEEKS. MANY OF THE LOCAL COMPANIES HAVE SENT REPRESENTATIVES TO MIAMI IN AN EFFORT TO EXPEDITE THEIR LONG AWAITED SHIPMENTS ALTHOUGH WITH LITTLE SUCCESS. THIS PRACTICE, WHILE JUSTIFIED IN EXTRA-ORDINARY CASES, WOULD ADD TO THE COSTS OF IMPORTING IF IT BECAME A WIDESPREAD PRACTICE.

5. COMMENT: LOCAL IMPORTERS HAVE A HISTORY OF BEING AMENABLE TO IMPORTS FROM THE U.S., ABOUT TWO-FIFTHS OF PURCHASES OF THE IMPORT-ORIENTED ECONOMY OF THE NETHERLANDS ANTILLES ARE FROM THE UNITED STATES. WITHIN THE PAST YEAR, WITH THE MORE FAVORABLE RELATION OF THE DOLLAR TO EUROPEAN CURRENCIES, IMPORTS FROM THE UNITED STATES HAVE BECOME EVEN MORE ATTRACTIVE AND THE PROPORTION OF IMPORTS FROM THE U.S. SHOULD BE EVEN GREATER. SUCH ADVANTAGE COULD EASILY BE LOST HOWEVER IF DELIVERY TIME IS UNREASONABLY LONG AND EXTRA COSTS OF STORAGE AS WELL AS ADDITIONAL IMPORTER TIME AND EFFORT MUST BE EXPENDED ON EACH SHIPMENT.

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6. ACTION REQUESTED: DEPARTMENTS OF STATE AND COMMERCE SHOULD JOINTLY INVESTIGATE SITUATION TO SEEK SHORT AND LONG TERM SOLUTION TO PORT CONGESTION PROBLEM. RAPID ACTION COULD SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVE EXPORT POSSIBILITIES: CONTINUATION OF SHIPPING DELAYS WILL HAVE SERIOUS ADVERSE EFFECTS AND TEND TO NEGATE INCREASED EXPORT PROMOTION EFFORTS. CONGEN WILL APPRECIATE SOONEST TELEGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON STUDY OF

PROBLEM IN ORDER THAT IT MAY INFORM CONCERNED BUYERS OF U.S.  
GOODS.  
LOFTON

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
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